



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## OCTOBER PROCLAIMED DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – Governor Phil Bredesen has issued a proclamation designating October as the month to generate awareness about the talents and abilities of Tennessee's citizens with disabilities.

"Workers with Disabilities: Ready for Tomorrow's Jobs Today" is the theme of the 2005 National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The theme selected for this year's awareness and educational program is more than a mere slogan; it is a statement of fact, an assertion of pride, and an advertisement to industry.

"Whatever the challenge, people with disabilities have demonstrated an indomitable attitude and a will to meet the challenge. They are working on Main Street and on Wall Street, in finance and high fashion, in the suburbs and in cities across the country and Tennessee. In high-profile media jobs and in everyday jobs in ordinary workday settings, persons with disabilities are proving day after day that they have the talent, skill and ability to do the job," said Governor Bredesen.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) within the Department of Human Services provides services to Tennesseans with disabilities. More than 3,500 individuals were employed after completing rehabilitation programs during fiscal year 2004-05.

More than 42,000 Tennesseans received rehabilitation services during 2004-05. These services included diagnosis, treatment, training, counseling, job placement assistance, and post-employment services.

"Persons with disabilities have boundless talents to contribute to our economy, vastly diversified skills to be utilized, and abundant energy for whatever work needs to be accomplished," Human Services Commissioner Gina Lodge said. "We must value every citizen's unique abilities and encourage people to participate moving forward into jobs today."

Seventeen Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers located in rural communities throughout the state and the residential comprehensive Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna provide additional services. For more information on the centers, visit <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/trc-tvtc.htm>

The Tennessee Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities and DRS staff are working with businesses and agencies across the state on activities recognizing Disability Employment Awareness Month. Attached is a partial list of scheduled events.

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CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR  
400 DEADERICK STREET  
NASHVILLE, TN 37248  
615.313.4700

## **DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH SCHEDULE**

<b>October 1</b>	First Annual GOFEST! Sponsored by UnumProvident and the City of Chattanooga strives to eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities and to be a model for all communities to celebrate everyone's contribution. Website: <a href="http://www.gofest.info">http://www.gofest.info</a> Contact: Cathy Justice (423) 425-7800	Chattanooga Waterfront
<b>October 4</b>	Area Recognition Awards Luncheon Southeast TN Placement Consortium The Convention and Trade Center Contact: Darlene Jenkins (423) 634-1635	Chattanooga
<b>October 11</b>	Area Recognition Awards Luncheon Contact: Alma Ruth Michael (731) 286-8313	Dyersburg TN Rehabilitation Center
<b>October 13</b>	Washington County Workforce Employer OutReach Committee (WEOC) Breakfast Symposium Contact: Teresa Smith (423) 434-6613	Johnson City Carnegie Hotel
<b>October 18</b>	Bridging For Accessibility 2005, Third Annual Celebration of Music, Food, & Fun Contact: Bridget Galvin (615) 862-6034	Nashville Shelby Street Bridge Plaza, East Bank (by Coliseum)
<b>October 19</b>	Disability Mentoring Day Contact: Trish Farmer (615) 313-4907	Statewide Recognition
<b>October 21</b>	Area Business Recognition Contact: Rick Molder (931) 375-4213	Columbia Career Center
<b>October 26</b>	TRC Disability Awareness Day Contact: Gale Demick (615) 459-6811, ext. 246	Smyrna TN Rehabilitation Center
<b>November 15</b>	Mayor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities Recognition Awards Contact: Bridget Galvin (615) 862-6034	Nashville